

**APHIS Site Visit Report – Republic of Poland**  
**CSF and SVD Status Evaluation**  
**November 3-8, 2004**

**Introduction**

APHIS conducted this site visit to complement and verify information previously provided by Poland in support of a request to be considered free of classical swine fever (CSF) and swine vesicular disease (SVD). The entire site visit team met with Polish veterinary officials at the General Veterinary Inspectorate (GVI) on the first day and then divided into two teams for the remainder of the visit. The two teams visited selected elements of the veterinary and animal health infrastructure, including provincial (vovoidship) veterinary offices, district veterinary offices, and various border inspection points (BIP). Both teams also visited both large and small swine operations.

The composition of the two main teams was as follows:

Team A	Kelly Rhodes	Veterinary Medical Officer Regionalization Evaluation Services, APHIS
	Tom Kasari	Veterinary Medical Officer/Senior Analyst Risk Analysis Team, CEAH, VS, APHIS
	Jay Mitchell	Director for Trade Policy Trade Support Team, IS, APHIS
	Xavier Mennig	Agricultural Specialist, IS, APHIS
	Sylvie Farez	Animal Health Risk Analyst Canadian Food Inspection Agency
Team B	Anne Goodman	Supervisory Staff Officer Regionalization Evaluation Services, APHIS
	Allan Hogue	Veterinary Medical Officer Risk Analysis Systems, PPD, APHIS
	John Schiltz	Iowa State Veterinarian

Team A visited the provincial veterinary office in Siedlce, the district veterinary office in Biala Podlaska, the road BIP with Belarus at Kukuryki, and the Warszawa-Okecie airport, as well large and small swine operations. Team B visited the district veterinary office in Szczytno, a road BIP with the Kaliningrad region of Russia at Bezledy, and the Gdynia seaport, as well as both large and small swine operations.

A third team visited the National Veterinary Research Institute (NVRI) in Pulawy, Poland. This team consisted of laboratory specialists from the Foreign Animal Diseases Diagnostic Laboratory (Samia Shawky, Head of the Diagnostic Services Section) and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (John Pasick, Head of the CSF and Avian Diseases Unit). The Head of the Department of Swine Diseases, a branch laboratory that performs all of the testing for SVD, met with the laboratory team during their visit to the NVRI.

Poland would like to export pork meat and occasionally live animals with high genetic value (30-40 per year) to the United States. There are currently one or more large U.S.

investors in Poland. Animals and products for export would be sourced primarily from areas of Wielkopolskie (west central Poland) and Warminsko-Mazurskie (northeast bordering Lithuania) provinces, as well as possibly Zachodniopomorskie (northwest bordering Germany) and Lubuskie (southeast bordering Belarus/Ukraine) provinces. These are all provinces with large swine operations.

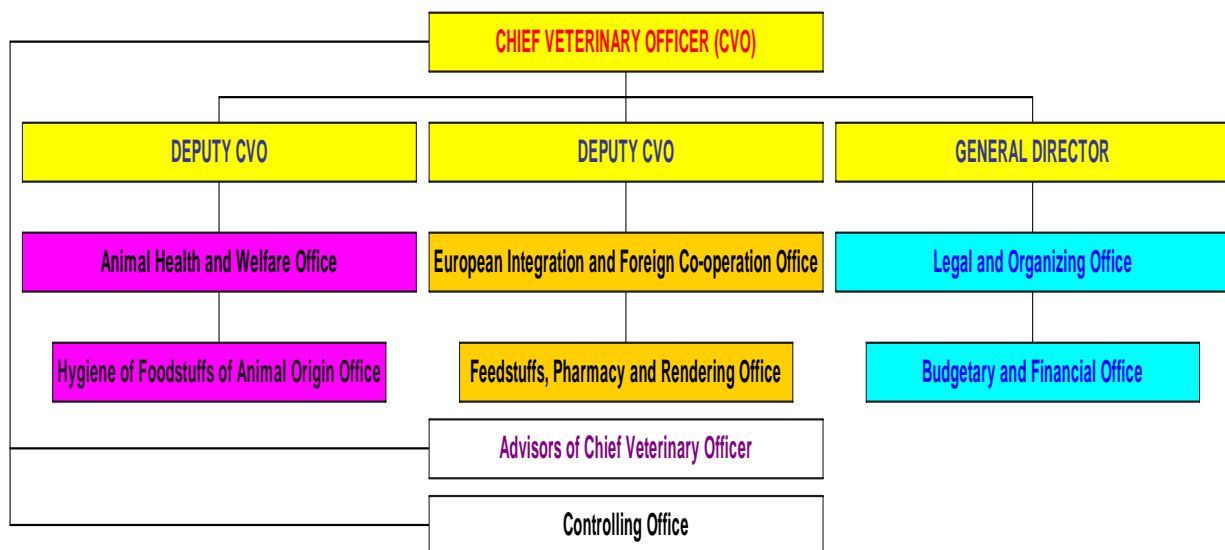
## Visits to official veterinary services offices

### General Veterinary Inspectorate

The entire site visit team met with members of the central office, including a Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer (DCVO), the Director of the Animal Health and Welfare Office, and the Director of the National Veterinary Research Institute. The Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) made a brief appearance. Presentations were given by members of the central office regarding the structure of the veterinary services and the NVRI, followed by a question and answer session concerning financial resources, CSF and SVD monitoring practices, and other topics.

#### 1. Structure of the veterinary services

Central veterinary service – The GVI is the central competent authority for Poland with 50 employees. The CVO is appointed by the Prime Minister at the request of the Minister of Agriculture. The CVO is head of the GVI and reports directly to the Minister of Agriculture. Reporting to the CVO are two Deputies and a General Director, with dependent responsibilities as shown:



The General Director is responsible for legal and budgetary affairs as well as an internal audit office, which audits the civil service and financial operations of the GVI. The Controlling Office, which has 6 employees, additionally functions to control and audit all levels of the official veterinary services. Not shown on the above schematic but also

reporting directly to the CVO are the Directors of the Office for Sanitary and Epidemiological Control and the Office of Borders.

The Office of Borders was established just 6 months prior to accession to the EU. Until the time of accession, the office functioned to adjust Polish law and physical structures at the border crossings to EU requirements. As of May 1, 2004, the Border Office functions to coordinate the activities of the BIPs, review appeals, issue permits for animals and products not harmonized under EU legislation, create and approve health certificates for third countries, and oversee the construction of two new BIPs.

The Office for Sanitary and Epidemiological Control consists of 8 people, most of whom are experts in sanitary issues. The function of this office is advisory and the role is to deal with emergency situations.

Regional and local veterinary services – At the regional level, the country is divided into 16 provinces, each of which has a Provincial Veterinary Inspectorate (PVI). The Chief of each PVI is appointed by the Governor of the province and approved by the CVO. The organizational structure of the PVIs is similar to that of the GVI, with divisions for animal health and welfare, food safety, animal feedstuffs, etc. There is a diagnostic laboratory in each of the provinces, most of which are accredited by the European Commission (EC). All provincial laboratories have applied for EC accreditation. These laboratories report to the NVRI, and the Director of the NVRI reports to the Ministry of Agriculture.

Each province is divided into several districts which each have a designated District Veterinary Inspectorate (DVI). There are 301 District Veterinary Officers (DVO) who oversee the field activities within each district. The organizational structure of the DVIs is also similar to that of the GVI. The official veterinarians at the district level are responsible for supervising private veterinary practitioners approved to perform official duties.

Border inspection – There are 9 EC-approved BIPs with veterinary control: 3 seaports, 1 airport, and 5 road crossings. There are plans to open 2 more BIPs within 2 years, in 2005 a rail crossing at Terespol on the border with Belarus and in 2006 a road crossing at Hrebenne on the border with Ukraine. The Chief of each BIP is appointed by the CVO and reports directly to the CVO.

Diagnostic laboratories – The NVRI in Pulawy is the reference laboratory for CSF but the main activity is research. There are 360 employees of which 110 are scientists. The NVRI has 19 labs and 2 branches, one of which is dedicated to vesicular diseases including SVD. The annual budget is approximately 11 million zloty, of which 1/3 comes from the Ministry of Science (research), slightly over 1/3 from the Ministry of Agriculture (reference lab), and the rest from services provided. The NVRI branch laboratory in Zdunska Wola is the national reference laboratory for SVD.

## 2. Financial resources

The general GVI budget comes from the Ministry of Agriculture. There is also a financial reserve of 70 million zloty (20.6 million USD) for monitoring of infectious animal diseases. The budget for the provincial and district services is established in a budgetary law approved each year by the parliament. Limited cost recovery occurs through fees for

service such as issuing health certificates and permits; however, this money goes to the national budget, not directly to the GVI. Personnel at the province and district levels are paid more than personnel at the central level. Approved vets are highest paid.

Poland receives support from the EU for monitoring of bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis, as well as vaccination for rabies in foxes (seeking eradication). They plan to apply to the EU after approval by the Council of Ministers for funds to monitor Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis and Aujeszky's disease. The EU would cover only 50% of the project cost.

### 3. Approved private veterinarians

Approval of private veterinarians is permitted and their role defined under Article 16 of the Veterinary Law. The Chief DVO can appoint approved veterinarians to carry out official duties. The remuneration of these persons is approved by the Ministry of Agriculture. There are approximately 2000 approved private veterinarians contracting with the official services, most of whom perform inspection of slaughter animals. There are approximately 7000 private veterinarians in Poland. Contracted private veterinarians are supervised by veterinary officials at the district level. Article 27 of the Veterinary Law states that approved vets can be used in emergency situations.

### 4. Disease surveillance

The last CSF case in Poland occurred in 1994 and a surveillance program has been in place since 1996. An April 2003 regulation stipulates a 2-tiered program requiring 59 samples from domestic pigs in "higher risk" districts and 29 samples from "lower risk" districts. Random sampling of domestic swine on high risk farms occurs within each county (but not really random: the DVO independently selects the "highest risk" farms for testing). Blood clots, tonsils and lymph nodes are collected from 10% of all wild boar shot each year according to a county plan; samples are theoretically also taken from all fallen boar. The official veterinary services work with the hunters associations to ensure compliance with the wild boar testing requirements. There is no bonus system for hunters or veterinarians.

CSF testing is conducted by 4 provincial laboratories as well as the NVRI. There have been 14 suspect cases so far in 2004. The majority of suspect cases are actually porcine dermatitis and nephropathy syndrome (PDNS), which is common in Europe and can mimic the clinical signs of CSF. When a CSF case is suspected, the farm is quarantined until the test results are available. SVD testing occurs at the laboratory in Zdunska Wola.

The EU does not subsidize either CSF or SVD surveillance.

### 5. Other swine diseases present

The major swine diseases present in Poland are PDNS, swine dysentery, adenomatosis, and mixed respiratory infections, primarily *Mycoplasma hyopneumonia* and *Pasteurella haemophilis*. There are also sporadic cases of Aujeszky's disease and trichinosis (all pigs tested at slaughter). The majority of health problems occur on the medium-sized swine farms, but regional differences are apparent.

Poland has tested over 1 million cattle over 30 months of age for BSE, confirmed 18 BSE cases, and continues to actively test for the disease.

#### 6. Disease status of neighboring countries

Poland receives information on the disease status of neighboring EU countries via the Animal Disease Notification System (ADNS). Information on non-EU countries is obtained from the OIE, from the CVOs of neighboring countries, from the media, and from diplomatic missions. Poland has signed agreements with Russia, Ukraine and Belarus that specify disease notification; however, there currently appears to be a very poor working relationship at all levels between Poland and Belarus. Access to information regarding the epizootic situation in neighboring non-EU countries has declined since accession. Direct contacts (CVO-CVO) have declined substantially. Because Russia, Belarus and Ukraine vaccinate, it is harder to evaluate their disease status.

#### 7. Disease reporting

Owners, veterinarians and others are required by law to report suspicion of CSF or SVD. A penalty can be assessed if the suspicion is not reported within 24 hours. Veterinarians are told to report suspicion to the local DVI if they have treated a fever for 3 days with no improvement.

#### 8. Animal identification

The animal identification system for swine is undergoing implemented with greater representation of large farms than small farms. All 700,000 swine herds have a unique identification number. Enforcement is ongoing in that swine without identification are not eligible for slaughter or sale for breeding purposes. Every farm must have a unique number to receive EU payments; this applies to swine, cattle, goats, and sheep. Trace-back from slaughter can be accomplished through systems used by the slaughterhouses to track payments (routine suppliers contracting with an agreement number assigned to the owner).

Although all herds have herd identification numbers, officials estimated that individual identification is only 50-60% enforced. Central veterinary officials seemed to feel Poland may not need a fully operational system for individual swine identification and mentioned that Germany has questioned the need for individual swine identification.

#### 9. Slaughter processes

Most large swine operations contract with a single slaughterhouse. An official veterinarian at the provincial level approves each slaughterhouse for export. For third countries, the provincial officer sends an application to the GVI, and the CVO sends an officer to inspect the slaughterhouse. Slaughterhouses are audited quarterly by provincial authorities. There are approximately 700 slaughterhouses approved for export to other EU countries. National law covers all slaughter regulations and even small farms are required to send their animals to official plants for slaughter.

#### 10. Training

Training is provided through simulation exercises at the central and district level. The national contingency plans are updated every 5 years as required by EC. Simulations are conducted annually on various foreign animal diseases. Since 2003, simulations for FMD, END, and HPAI have been coordinated by the central level. Other simulations are

conducted at the province level. Again, recent ones have involved FMD and HPAI. Russia and Ukraine participated in the simulations conducted by the provinces. In 2003, there was a 4 day exercise. This year, training was conducted for 3 days on the 8 diseases for which there are contingency plans: FMD, CSF, ASF, AI, END, SVD, and 2 fish diseases. Training has also been provided for BSE.

The group was told that the choice of diseases for training was based on the likely experience of the veterinary force in the country. Polish officials consider CSF not as high a priority since the vets currently working in the country have seen or are familiar with it. FMD and HPAI were chosen because they have occurred in the EU in recent years, and many of the working vets are not as familiar with these diseases.

#### 11. Livestock demographics

There are approximately 700,000 swine producers in Poland, of which approximately 650,000 have less than 50 pigs. Poland produces around 5 million fat hogs per year from 300,000 breeding sows. Most producers are small but most of the pig production comes from large operations. The trend is toward further consolidation of the industry.

#### Provincial Veterinary Inspectorate – Siedlce (Mazowieckie province)

In each case, a provincial veterinary official (PVO) provided an overview of the activities and responsibilities of the PVI followed by a question-and-answer session, document review, and a tour of the facilities. Team A met with the Chief PVO in Siedlce.

##### 1. Administrative structure

Mazowieckie province is located in east central Poland, with no external borders. There are 38 districts within the province, including the city of Warsaw, and 34 district veterinary offices. There are 1600 veterinarians registered in the province, of which about 560 are approved private veterinarians and 150-180 work as official veterinarians at the district or province level. The facilities appeared to be sufficient for the activities conducted (including a large portable machine for use in the event that large numbers of swine need to be destroyed, but which was to date unused).

This office is responsible for preparing the provincial budget for animal disease activities; coordinating and supervising work at the district level and resolving problems that arise; preparing contingency plans for the province and approving contingency plans prepared by the DVIs; receiving monthly animal disease status reports from the DVIs and preparing a compiled report for the GVI; providing training for DVOs and approved veterinarians; preparing press releases and other information for the media; and providing technical advisory services to the DVI. The PVO also allocate central reserve funds from the Minister of Agriculture or the Prime Minister to the districts to cover unexpected disease outbreaks.

##### 2. Financial resources

The amount in the country budget is divided by 16. There is an additional indemnity reserve. If this is not enough, the province can apply through the GVI to the Ministry of Agriculture for more money.

### 3. Approved private veterinarians

Approved private veterinarians are required by law to have certain skills. District chiefs are responsible for confirming the skill level of private practitioners prior to approval. The funding agreement occurs at the province level; however, selection and supervision of approved veterinarians occurs at the district level. These veterinarians are evaluated a minimum of once per year by law. Provincial officials monitor district level supervision as needed. All veterinarians are registered with the National Veterinary Chamber through one of the 16 provincial branches.

### 4. Training

The PVI provides a monthly seminar for district officers to facilitate exchange of knowledge and learning of new regulations. The PVI will also organize additional subject matter training at the request of a district officer. This province participated in a national FMD simulation exercise for 3 days in 2003. In Dec 2003, a specialist from Pulawy provided training in all aspects of CSF, including epidemiology, to district officers in this province. The PVI also holds 1-2 day seminars on individual animal diseases and offers a 5-semester course that about 60-70% of the staff have taken

The GVI provides training for provincial officers. The PVI officials took part in a 5-day training course on FMD in Nov 2002 in Katowice, and END course in 2003, and some received additional training in various diseases that was funded through the EU's PHARE program. PVI officials have also participated in training in the UK on FMD and BSE surveillance. Over 65% of provincial officers have an additional degree in epidemiology, administration, or another related field.

### 5. Animal identification

The Agency for the Restructuring and Modernization of Agriculture (ARMA) is responsible for implementing and maintaining animal identification systems as well as tracking animal movements. This is an independent governmental agency under the Ministry of Agriculture. ARMA issues passports and ear tags. Animal owners are obliged to keep a register of animals existing on the property. ARMA must be notified within 7 days whenever an animal is bought or sold.

District officers check individual animal identification and the herd register kept by each owner when on the farm. They have access to the ARMA database via the local ARMA office, although in the future the district and province levels will have direct access. Through ARMA, the district officers can check that the number of animals and the individual ear tag numbers match what was found on the farm.

### 6. Movement control

Movement control is governed by the Veterinary Law, animal welfare laws, animal identification laws, and requirements for export/trade, as well as individual regulations of the CVO. The district officers perform most of the movement control activities; the provincial officers mainly supervise the district level.

### 7. Disease surveillance and notification

Disease surveillance – Follows the national plan, which sets a minimum number of samples to be taken for SVD and CSF. The provincial office collects census information

from the DVIs and prepares a monitoring schedule, then collects reports from the districts regarding what was done or not done. The provincial office coordinates between the field veterinarians and the laboratory. The district officers determine the sampling plan based on risk factors for disease.

Disease notification – There are two categories of disease reporting: (1) diseases that must be reported immediately and action taken, like CSF, and (2) diseases that are reported monthly but no action is required, like canine distemper or Aleutian mink disease. Reports of suspicious cases in the first category are sent immediately and followed by confirmation or rule-out. Monthly reports are sent from the DVI to the PVI to the GVI both electronically and by hard copy.

#### 8. Emergency response

The main function of the PVI is in organizing and supervising the response. The district officers carry out the technical investigation and can ask for assistance from the PVI but would more likely use an approved veterinarian. The PVI arranges transport and financial resources, and makes experts available.

In case of an outbreak, the Chief PVO establishes a crisis team and crisis center, coordinates the activities of the district offices and district crisis teams, provides supervision for destroying animals and utilization of carcasses, organizes compensation for farmers (paid for by the province budget but delivered through the DVI), coordinates activities of associated civil services (fire, police). The Chief PVO is advised by an emergency council in these activities.

Crisis centers operate at all three levels under the supervision of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. At the province level, the province manager is the chief of the crisis team. At the district level, the mayor is the chief. These persons have the power to issue necessary decisions.

Compensation – In case of suspicion, the Chief DVO issues an administrative order that sets the conditions with which the animal owner must comply. If these conditions are fulfilled, compensation is paid regardless of whether disease is confirmed. The payment is for market value determined by 2 independent inspectors and one district official. If there is a large discrepancy in estimated value the case is sent to the courts.

#### 9. Miscellaneous

Industry associations – There are national breeders, milk producers and beef producers associations. Local authorities strongly advise farmers to join these associations; however, the effort is just starting and farmers are in the learning stage. There is an economic incentive in that these associations can certify approval of commodities.

Slaughter practices – Routine ante- and post-mortem inspection occurs regardless of the size of the slaughterhouse or whether the product is intended for export or domestic use. Trichinosis is tested for by proteolytic digestion.

Waste feeding – Waste feeding is prohibited by national and EU law so the Chief PVO sees no need for additional regulations at the province level. Sanitary inspections under the Ministry of Health control all waste substances. Sanitary inspectors keep a register of where the waste goes and notify veterinary officials if it has gone to a farm.



Documentation – The site visit team saw copies of several contingency plans as well as the monthly reports submitted by the district and provincial officials.

#### District Veterinary Inspectorate – Biala Podlaska (Lubelskie province)

Team A met with the Chief DVO and the Deputy Chief in charge of animal health and welfare. This district is located in the Lubelskie Province on the border with Belarus and is the third largest district in Poland, containing 20 municipalities including 3 cities. There are 11,500 swine farms with 180,000 pigs; these are primarily small operations, with only about 30 farms having more than 200 pigs. The DVI employs 10 veterinarians, 3 in the animal health and welfare section (including the Deputy Chief) and the rest in food hygiene. The district officers supervise 50 approved veterinarians in animal disease control and food hygiene.

Activities of the district officials include collecting data from the approved veterinarians and providing monthly reports to the PVI, disease prevention activities, responding to notification of animal disease from owners and practitioners, preparing and upgrading contingency plans, and supervising and providing training/updates (every 3 months) for approved veterinarians. This DVI was audited by the PVI in January 2004 as part of the annual animal disease audit process, and in June 2004 regarding supervision of approved veterinarians.

##### 1. Approved private veterinarians

Veterinarians apply to the DVI at the start of each year to be approved. They must meet certain requirements set at the national level, including 1 year of private veterinary experience, 3 months experience in a slaughterhouse, 3 months experience at a dairy processing plant, and 1 month experience at a fish/seafood processing facility. The Chief DVO organizes individual meetings with each to check their knowledge according to Ministry of Agriculture criteria (written into the national legislation). The Deputy Chief for food safety inspections is also present. It is most common for private veterinarians to be approved for both animal health and food safety, but they can be approved for only one discipline. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of each month, approved veterinarians provide an account of their activities and of diseases encountered that are subject to notification and reporting. Approved veterinarians cannot certify for export.

##### 2. Training

New graduates seeking to become approved veterinarians can receive 2 weeks intensive training. Older veterinarians may have specialized training through the NVRI. The DVI provides ongoing training for approved veterinarians, and non-approved veterinarians as needed, every 3 months to update them on legislative changes and to review disease information. The veterinarians also receive additional training on CSF and SVD at the quarterly meetings, including what samples to take.

This district participated in a simulation exercise for FMD in November 2003, as well as a 2001 joint US-Polish-Ukrainian theoretical training on CSF and FMD held in Chelm, Poland, in response to the UK outbreak. Additional training for the district officials is provided by the PVI.

### 3. Movement control

Animal health certificates are required only for export or trade. Health certificates were used for internal movement prior to accession but are not used now. Animal health certificates for export or trade are issued only by official veterinarians at an assembly center. There are only cattle assembly centers in this district; however, exporters can apply to the DVI and, if they fulfill the requirements for assembly centers, an official veterinarian will go to the farm and certify the shipment.

Shipments to EU markets must originate from an assembly center, which could be a single farm if the requirements are fulfilled. Animals are required to remain on the assembly center premises for 30 days prior to trade. An approved veterinarian under supervision performs the physical exam and any required sampling. Each lot of animals must be of the same physical condition and separated by gender. An official veterinarian certifies the health papers and supervises the loading and unloading of animals. The shipment is entered into ANIMO and the server informs the point of destination as well as any border crossing points. An official veterinarian at the destination confirms the arrival.

Collection points are for internal movement only (47 in this district). Movement must be approved by the competent authority, and animal ID and welfare requirements must be satisfied prior to movement, although an extensive physical exam is not performed unless an abnormality is noted. Loading and unloading of animals is supervised by an approved veterinarian. Each veterinarian has a booklet of certification papers; the original goes with the animals and the booklet with the carbon copies goes to the DVI, where it is kept for 3 years. The buyer must also keep records of the transaction for 3 years and animal traders must send a report on their activities to the DVI.

Exports to third countries must be certified by an official veterinarian. Slaughterhouse inspections are supervised by an official veterinarian who certifies meat for export.

Poland is on the ANIMO system at present, although a pilot version of TRACES is under development. TRACES was not available in Polish at the time of accession.

### 4. Animal identification

Two DVOs have access to the ARMA database, which for each animal gives the breed, sex, age, location and movement history. The ARMA system also identifies collection points, assembly points and markets. The owner must send information on sold, bought or fallen stock to ARMA. The computer system raises an alert if information is missing or conflicting. The DVI also keeps a registry of herds and records of auctions.

### 5. Disease surveillance

Domestic swine are monitored for CSF, SVD, FMD, Aujeszky's disease, leptospirosis, and brucellosis. The number of samples required varies according to the disease, but is usually 20 per year for diseases other than CSF. However, in this district the veterinary officials must collect 59 samples per year for CSF monitoring in domestic swine since they border Belarus, which is considered affected by CSF. The district officers prefer to take one sample per farm because the farms are very spread out. District officials have the latitude to determine the sampling plan but are encouraged from the national level to

sample as many farms as possible, both large and small. Samples are taken by an official veterinarian. They have taken 34 samples for CSF so far this year.

The district officials must also collect CSF samples from all fallen wild boar and 10% of shot wild boar, although they have difficulty reaching this quota. There is a standing agreement between the hunting associations and the veterinary officials. The national hunting association estimates the population of wild boar each year and determines the number of animals that can be hunted in each province. Hunters must have a permit for each boar shot and are required to report animals acting oddly. There is no monitoring program for SVD in wild boar.

Each year the district chief meets with the local hunting associations to tell them the number of samples needed. Approved veterinarians provide game meat inspection and take samples. Hunters can also take samples. This district usually barely makes the quota. Hunted animals are marked with an individual ID as a requirement of the hunting association. Samples are brought to the DVI and driven from there to the NVRI.

District officials must collect 10 samples per year for SVD monitoring in domestic swine. This district collects 1 sample per farm from 10 farms chosen randomly but considering risk factors such as proximity to forest land or border, high swine density, or recurring health problems. Within each herd, animals are sampled which are showing abnormal behavior, movement or temperature.

#### 6. Waste feeding

Veterinarians distribute information to animal owners regarding prohibition on waste feeding. When animals are sent to slaughter, the owner must certify that no swill has been fed. District officials randomly check farms each year – 10% should be checked but they are not up to this level yet. The farm visits have multiple purposes – waste feeding is only one (also animal welfare, animal identification, MBM ban). District officials see few compliance problems, mostly animal ID and small biosecurity infractions on large swine farms. The district animal health officials also have an agreement with the sanitary inspectors (SANEPID) who supervise the movement of swill.

Inspection of rendering plants was done previously but there are none in this district since accession to the EU. Heat-treated waste used to be fed in Poland but now under EC requirements can only go to dog feed or rendering plants for incineration.

#### 7. Compliance enforcement

If animal owners or traders are found to be out of compliance with the laws and regulations on the official checks, the district chief can issue an administrative decision indicating what they must do and when, and detailing the penalties for noncompliance. The district chief can also take more immediate action if needed; for instance, this year the district chief stopped all activity at a collection point because of compliance issues.

The local veterinary chamber is quite strict and can suspend or revoke a veterinary license. A representative is also present when the district chief interviews prospective approved veterinarians. The district chief can revoke approval of veterinarians if needed via an administrative decision – this has been done in the past.

## 8. Emergency response

The DVI has prepared district level contingency plans for CSF, SVD, ASF, FMD, HPAI, END, and BSE. The national contingency plan is updated every 6 months but the district plans are updated more frequently, in part to ensure accurate contact information. The contingency plans are based on experience and the Australian plan for FMD, which is recognized as one of the best in the world.

Neither district official could recall a suspicion of CSF; the last case in this district was in 1992. In a hypothetical situation, a district official would quarantine the premises, conduct a census and take appropriate samples. If the results were positive, the official would stop animal and human movement onto and off of the farm, and set up protection and surveillance zones. Stamping out would occur on the infected farm via electrical killing and shipment in a sealed transport to a “Category 1” facility dedicated for SRM disposal. The chief district veterinary officer has the authority to accomplish these tasks.

If various production units can be shown to be independent of each other the actions above can be administratively limited to individual premises.

## 9. Miscellaneous

View of risk in border area – The district officials consider that the situation is not too bad since most of the traffic moves to Belarus rather than into Poland, in response to market factors. District officials treat Belarus as an unknown status country. There is no formal or informal cooperation with Belarus official at this level, although the DVI cooperates closely with the BVI for information exchange. Movement of wild boar is possible across the border if they can swim the River Bug.

Public awareness – Official and approved veterinarians distribute leaflets to animal owners and others in the livestock industries. If there is an outbreak here or in neighboring countries, veterinary officials would use the media to alert. The district chief also provides information directly to the municipal Council.

Documentation – The site visit team saw contingency plans, a copy of the law that states the knowledge requirements for approved veterinarians, the monthly reports of approved veterinarians and the district officials, copies of the multipurpose farm visit forms (including compliance with waste-feeding), and outlines and attendance for training provided for the approved veterinarians. Records were primarily kept in paper form.

### District Veterinary Inspectorate – Szczytno (Warminsko-Mazurskie province)

Team B visited the DVI in Szczytno. This district includes 2200 holdings with swine, of which the vast majority have less than 50 pigs. There are 42 holdings that have 50-500 pigs (medium size), and at least one very large swine operation (15,000 pigs). Last year official veterinarians visited 700 premises. Szczytno is located in the Warmisko-Mazurskie province, which is the 3<sup>rd</sup> biggest province in Poland with 24,000 herds and 800,000 swine. Four holdings in the province have very large production herds. Veterinary officials indicated that this province would likely be the source of exports to the United States.

The province veterinarian traveled with the team and answered questions during the trip. He indicated that his duties were primarily administrative and that field activities were performed by the district office.

#### 1. Disease surveillance

Disease surveillance – This is considered to be a high risk district for CSF because it contains an international airport (even though it is not used) and is a vacation area with lots of lakes. Fifty-nine samples are taken annually among the domestic swine population. Sampling was described as random but actually targeted “higher risk” premises. These included premises near the airport and others that were (1) close to the last CSF outbreak in 1993-1994; (2) locations with large number of animals moving through; (3) farms bordering forests where wild boar live; or (4) locations with a significant amount of people movement. The PVO considered the most dangerous farms to be those near the forest.

Samples are taken from both large and small swine operations. Observations on fever are used to identify and target risk animals within a herd. Fifty-nine samples were taken from 15 premises in 2003; nine of these premises were considered small. Forty-eight samples had been taken so far in 2004.

In the province, 800 wild boar had been killed and 5% sampled. Wild boar are shot in a designated season as allowed in the regulations. Weilbark is considered a high-risk province so sampling is done according to the density of wild boar in the region, which is less than 2 boar/km<sup>2</sup> according to the DVO. The target for blood sampling is 43 boar. Blood, tonsils, and lymph nodes are samples from shot boar.

Hunters have two responsibilities: they are expected to deliver samples and notify the DVI of any wild boar found dead. Data kept include the identity of the person who shot the animal, when, where, a reference number for the sample, the name of the hunter association, a description of the carcass, its age, weight, health status and any strange behavior noticed prior to death. A different form is used to record information on the animals found dead. Official samples are taken by a veterinarian. There does not appear to be a bonus system for sampling in wild boar (although there is for rabies in foxes).

In 1997, the serological survey detected 2 positive wild boar. Results were confirmed by virus isolation. Officials increased sampling (did not say how much) but found no other positive animals.

There is little testing for SVD in wild boar. The last case occurred in 1972 in young piglets imported from Austria. In domestic swine, 10 samples are taken from each province per year for SVD testing.

#### 2. Animal identification

Only 43 holdings in this district were registered so that they could sell swine. The owner must notify the district office of animal movement. The DVO did not think that this system was working well yet.

#### 3. Movement control

The DVO, who knew that the team would be visiting the BIP at Bezledy the next day, pulled a report of a shipment of pigs being exported to Ukraine. The team saw the

corresponding documentation of animal movement at the Bezledy facility. The DVO indicated that there was little trade with other EU Member States from his district as yet and therefore he had not used TRACES or ANIMO to any extent.

#### 4. Emergency response

Policies and regulations reflecting EC control measures come from central level. Contingency plans reflect EC measures. Regarding implementation at the district level, that meant assignment of roles and responsibilities to each component of the plan and more or less training, depending on the particular district office.

#### 5. Miscellaneous

Documentation – Records of swine holdings, notifications, and monitoring activities were reviewed. The records were primarily hard copy and maintained in notebooks; however, the records seemed complete and thorough. Animal movement forms were also reviewed. Disease monitoring reports for CSF and SVD in the county in 2004 were also provided.

### **Visits to border inspection points**

Per the Director of the Border Office, there is a road crossing at Dorohusk that is only approved by the EC for animal feed at present moment, although Poland is seeking EC approval for other commodities.

#### Kukuryki road port

This is a road BIP on the border with Belarus that is approved by the EC for all types of products and live animals. It is inspected each year by the FVO. The BIP receives approximately 400 trucks per year for veterinary inspection, mostly carrying animal feed, casein, and fish. A few thousand horses are received per year – about 3 trucks per week with up to 26 horses per truck – but no other live animals are allowed from Belarus, although some cattle and swine are exported. One gelatin plant in Belarus is approved for export to the EU. This BIP is open 24 hours, 7 days per week, with 13 veterinarians and 4.5 support personnel. The veterinarians work 12 hour shifts.

Team A met with the Chief border inspection officer (BVO) of Kukuryki, who gave a brief overview and a tour of the facilities, and answered questions. Per the border chief, there are currently 8 EU-approved BIPs and two more planned at Terespol (rail) and Hrebenne (road). Terespol is projected to be approved in 2005 for products only and will be staffed by the same personnel as are at Kukuryki. Discussions are ongoing with the EC to approve Terespol for third-to-third country transit before construction is completed, to allow movement of commodities between the seaports and points east.

#### 1. Physical structure

This BIP was built to EU specifications in 2001. The facility is very large and impressive, located approximately 4km from the border. The building houses both the BVI and Customs Service employees. There are separate sectors for live ungulates, other live animals, products of animal origin for human consumption, and products of animal origin not for human consumption. The live animal sectors have appropriate facilities for animal

restraint and housing. The product sectors have adequate room for offloading, examination, sampling and storage at room temperature, refrigerated, or frozen. There is no on-site incinerator; however, there is a low-temperature holding facility from which products are transported to a rendering facility under supervision of the Customs Service.

Kukuryki is completely computerized. They are on the ANIMO system and use access to VetLex in conjunction with other distributed documents to determine the EC certification and import requirements. They have also developed some internal software to facilitate access to appropriate EC legislation.

## 2. Biosecurity

All employees must go through a clean room when entering any sector. A shower and complete change of clothing is required on both entry and exit. Each sector is cleaned and disinfected after unloading and reloading, as well as the storage rooms if used. All trucks pass over a disinfection mat at the point of entry. If there is an outbreak in Belarus the border chief would prepare to implement the preparedness plan but wait for a decision from the CVO.

## 3. Import and transit controls

Import controls – Three stages of control for both live animals and products: (1) document check of health certificates to determine whether the certified conditions are in accordance with EC regulations, and that the papers are filled in and signed correctly; (2) identity check (visual check of ear tags, chips, tattoos); and (3) general physical exam with a percentage singled out for a more thorough examination. Animal health documents are kept for 3 years, financial documents for 7 years, in a special archive room.

Live animals are usually unloaded unless they are considered to be dangerous. The proportion of animals that receive a detailed physical exam each month varies with the purpose for import: 5% of slaughter animals and 10% but not less than 10 head of breeding animals. The number of animals needed to fulfill these monthly percentages is estimated from the previous month. About 3% of animals are examined serologically each month. All sampling occurs during one week of each month and the sampling schedule is set in January. Horses are not held for the test results but follow-up occurs at the point of destination for seropositive animals and the BIP will hold the next shipment from that country until the results are received.

Live swine and derived products are harmonized commodities under EC regulations. No live swine are allowed from third countries not approved by the EC (Canada, Switzerland, Chile, Iceland, New Zealand) and no live swine or imports of swine origin are allowed from neighboring countries for human consumption.

Products are examined to ensure that they are properly marked and that the country and exporting corporation are on the approved list. Products also undergo physical control (check temperature, sample). Milk products are allowed for technical use only from neighboring countries (Russia).

If a dangerous animal disease is suspected, the commodity is immediately returned or destroyed. The border chief has the authority to close down the BIP as needed in case of suspicion or confirmation of infectious disease. If there is no immediate danger, the commodity is confiscated and the owner given 60 days to decide whether to take it back

or have it destroyed (at owner expense). The commodity is destroyed at owner expense after 60 days. Products or animals to be destroyed are held in a storage room. The rendering company is called and the shipment moved to rendering under supervision of the Customs Service. Rendering is confirmed by the company and the Customs Service.

Transit controls – Transit between third countries is allowed provided that there are no restrictions on the source country. These products undergo a document check and identity check, but no further unloading or alteration of the cargo is allowed in Poland. The conveyance is sealed and a specific exit point designated.

Quarantine – This BIP can keep animals if quarantine is required as a condition for entry but this usually only occurs for animal welfare reasons or if the documentation is incomplete. Most horses are going directly to slaughter. The district chief or competent authority at the point of destination decides whether quarantine is necessary and if so designates a specific place. The BIP informs the district chief when a shipment is coming.

If a List A disease is suspected, the shipment is held at the BIP. If inspectors are suspicious of other diseases, the shipment can be rejected or a quarantine ordered at the BIP, at a premises designated by the district chief, or at the place of destination.

#### 4. Veterinary control of passenger traffic

Passenger traffic – Inspection of passenger traffic is performed by the Customs Service and the Border Service. There is no veterinary control at international crossings other than those approved by the EU. The Customs Service can reject or destroy certain products, or forward them to an approved BIP for further inspection.

Posters to promote public awareness of prohibited meat, milk, and milk products are posted at all border crossings. No products of animal origin are allowed except small quantities for personal use from Andorra, the Faeroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, San Marino, and Switzerland. From Andorra, Norway and San Marino there is no limit, other countries have a 5kg limit.

Smuggling – Smuggled products are usually discovered by the Customs Service or the Border Service (military). If products are caught they are sent to a BIP approved for veterinary inspection. They are usually rejected or seized and destroyed since they have no documentation. The Customs Service also checks the cabins of all trucks, and all trucks pass through a radiation detector and a machine that uses X-ray technology to scan the cargo.

#### 5. Miscellaneous

Documentation – The site visit team reviewed entrance documentation and the computer tracking systems, including internet access to VetLex, ANIMO, and an internal system, as well as a video of the seizure and disposal of some caviar. The team also viewed an impressive archive room for paper documents.

#### Warszawa-Okecie airport

This is the only airport in Poland that is approved by the EU for veterinary inspection, and it is approved for all live animals and animal products. There are 5 veterinarians: 4



inspectors and a supervisor. The volume of traffic diminished after accession since there are few direct flights to Warsaw (Canada, United States, Israel). There have been no inspections of large animals since accession, and no inspections of swine products.

Team A met with the border chief and 2 inspectors, as well as the Director of the Border Office, and received a tour of the facility.

#### 1. Import controls

Approximately 20% of all commodities entering at the Warsaw airport are subject to veterinary inspection, and of those commodities 100% is inspected. Since accession, only a shipment of exported powdered milk that was returned has been confiscated. There are no export controls.

Spot checks may be conducted at the final destination. The district officials have the authority and responsibility to do this. Live animals may be checked during quarantine. If products are tested they are held here until the test results return. If there are no special restrictions then there are no additional checks beyond the border.

#### 2. Veterinary control of passenger traffic

Per the veterinary officials, signs detailing prohibited products are prominently displayed in the main terminal (the site visit team did not see these signs on arrival). The Customs Service normally inspects approximately 25% of luggage and all luggage is screened by X-ray. Passenger screening is increased in outbreak situations to 50% of luggage and 25% of passengers. There are containers to collect confiscated or surrendered products, which are then taken to cold storage and on to rendering. During the 2001 FMD outbreak in the UK, all passengers and luggage were inspected, declarations were required, and disinfection mats and hand-washing stations were in use.

The Customs Service can pass suspect products to the veterinary inspection for judgment. These are then transported to the inspection facility. The owner pays for the disposal cost if necessary. No products were seized last month.

Per the border chief, there are no direct flights from high-risk countries to the east; all of these flights pass through Frankfurt first. On flights from Belarus, Moscow, Minsk and Kiev, 35% of luggage is inspected. There is a special terminal for inspection of hunting trophies on flights from Moscow. Pre-notification is required.

#### 3. Training

The border inspectors received practical training both at the Warsaw airport and at other points in the EU prior to accession. They have not participated in any simulations, but received additional practical experience for 6 months during the 2001 FMD outbreak in the UK.

#### 4. Waste control

The airport has an agreement with the catering company for the airlines. All waste is collected by a municipal company and brought to a holding area, then transported to an incineration facility outside of the city. A confirmation of destruction is sent to the border officials monthly.

The BIP has an agreement with the rendering company for destruction of dead animals. They are transported in a sealed conveyance, weighed, and incinerated. The rendering company is inspected and approved annually by a DVO. The company returns a document confirming the incineration.

#### 5. Emergency response

If CSF or another contagious animal disease is suspected, the suspect animal is held, surveillance and protection zones created, and the GVI notified. The animal is killed on site and samples taken. The area is cleaned and disinfected (the airport has a special group for disinfection), foot baths placed throughout the airport, and movement restricted. The airport Chief BVO has the authority to issue an administrative decision setting out these procedures.

#### 6. Miscellaneous

Documentation – The site visit team saw the computer tracking systems including ANIMO, paper records, and an agreement with the catering company for waste disposal.

### Bezledy road port

Team B visited this road port on the border with the Kaliningrad region of Russia. The animal disease status of the Russian Federation is not clear, but swine and swine products are not accepted under the harmonized EU legislation. There are few animals on the Russian side to export; in fact, the area needs Polish animals and products. Horses for exhibition are imported into Poland but these do not stay. Other imports are fish, rabbit meat, skins, and hides. Most of the products shipments coming through are from fish plants authorized by the FVO to export. Products from 30 of these commonly move through this port. Smuggled items are primarily cigarettes and alcohol.

Traffic at Bezledy is low; they average 2 trucks per day with animal products. The facility is open from 8 am to 8 pm. Workload has decreased significantly since accession. Prior to accession, a great deal of effort was dedicated to export activities., but those activities ceased upon accession.

#### 1. Physical structure

The BIP facilities at Bezledy are quite new and meet EC criteria. The BIP was completed January 1, 2004 and is quite spectacular with separate sections for material for human consumption and material for non-human consumption, huge freezers and cold storage facilities, inspection/testing rooms, space for off-loading animals, rooms for storage of confiscated materials, and rooms for hanging carcasses. Much of this facility has never been used. The EC funded 50% and the Polish government funded the rest.

#### 2. Import controls

Imported commercial shipments must be accompanied by EC veterinary documents. Documents must be submitted by fax to the inspection post 24 hours prior to entry. Records are maintained for 3 years.

Trucks are checked first to see if the import documents are complete, then the physical shipment is compared to the entries on the documents. There is a computer-generated

system to select 20% of the boxes for a visual check. Three percent is checked in the laboratory (this sample is also selected by computer program). Tests to be performed are selected by the BIP officials. Tests usually focus on organoleptic properties but may measure metals. Some tests take 3 days. If the shipment is rejected, it is either returned or sent to rendering. Records are maintained of processing plants of origin. If a plant has a habit of sending rejected material, it is put on a blacklist. If a shipment of food or feed is rejected, a report goes to the central office, then to the EC, which then notifies all border ports.

No animal products have been confiscated at this facility. However, if they were, there is a written agreement in effect with a rendering plant. Within 2 hours, the plant would pick up the material for disposal.

The team followed up with an ANIMO record of pigs exported from Weilbark to Ukraine. The records were not searchable and the team had to identify an approximate date of export, at which point the record was located. The team did not see computerized records, but rather hard copies of the records filed chronologically in a notebook. This facility is not on TRACES yet.

Quarantine – There are no permanent government-run quarantine facilities at Bezledy. If animals entered that required quarantine, a facility would be chosen by the district veterinarian. Live pigs would be quarantined on both sides of the border for 21 days.

### 3. Veterinary control of passenger traffic

Passengers through Bezledy are screened by the Customs Service and Border Patrol. All trucks are x-rayed. Most of the contraband is drugs [?], alcohol, and cigarettes. Sniffer dogs are used. One hundred percent of trucks and their "passports" are examined. Customs asks about agricultural products. Ninety percent of buses are inspected manually. We didn't see any luggage opened. The team was told that a scanner would be installed the following week. Bins were available for disposal of unacceptable material taken from passengers. Animal waste from trucks is rendered.

Customs and Border Patrol personnel control every border crossing, although veterinary controls are available only at designated ports. At the time of the visit, only ports that were EU-approved were allowed to have traffic in animals and animal products. If a person tries to cross the border with agricultural products at a facility that is not EU-approved, the individual is sent to a BIP that has a veterinary office.

### 4. Miscellaneous

A truck came through while the team was visiting. The team was told that the truck was carrying plant material. The BIP inspection facility is shared, although there are separate units for plant and animal materials.

Documentation – The team saw ANIMO records (hardcopy) and product import records.

### Gdynia seaport

Team B visited this seaport on the Baltic Sea. The current BIP at Gdynia handles 40 containers per day, representing both transit and import shipments. Transit shipments

include those that would be traveling from Brazil or the United States to Ukraine. Imports include fish (frozen), beef offals, casing from China, occasionally (but rarely) pork casings, heart and spleen – anything allowed by the EU. Acceptable products for non-human consumption include hides, fish meal, feed additives, and soya. The most common products entering this port are in 3 categories: meat constitutes 20%, poultry constitutes 50%, and by-products are 3%. The BIP is open 8am to 8pm, but hours for live animal entry are 7:30am to 3:30pm.

#### 1. Physical structure

The facility was very similar to the land port at Bezledy. The EU requirements for BIPs appear to be quite standardized as well as quite high. Also similar was the fact that much of the BIP had never been used.

Three categories of product (human, non-human, animals) can be examined simultaneously. There are 4 freezers for the material for human consumptions, 3 freezers for materials not for human consumption, 2 storage areas for byproducts, and 1 for animals. Facility units could only be accessed with electronic cards. Disinfectant mats were common. The facility has 10 inspectors. Four of these are sanitary controllers, not veterinarians. Two are accountants, 2 are retired employees and 2 are very new; there are also 3 support personnel.

#### 2. Import controls

New import inspection procedures at the port started May 1, 2004. Product shipments are sampled according to a scheme similar to the one described for Bezledy. Initially they are subjected to organoleptic tests. Samples are sent to the laboratory if there is a suspicion.

Products are rejected according to EC requirements. Representative requirements address residues. The team was given a list of rejected shipments, which included pig casings from China (antibiotic residues). However, the problem that was identified was subject to a negotiation that resulted in a certification agreement with China. This is handled as an addendum to the health certificate and requires laboratory results.

The last shipment of live animals came through the port approximately 3 years ago. The shipment was day-old ostrich chicks, which may have gone to the airport for further shipment. From a practical perspective, loading and unloading animals at seaports can result in animal welfare problems; also, the port is setup for container shipments, and live animals do not survive well in containers. Prior to EU accession, the only animals entering through the port were pets. The Customs Service will often reject animals before they reach veterinary inspectors.

Consignments are most often rejected because of smell or inappropriate certification. Customs officials direct shipments to sanitary or phytosanitary inspectors.

Illegal products are confiscated under the authority of an administrative declaration stating that they cannot enter. Port authorities give the importer time to decide what to do – the importer can dispose of the materials or return them to the point of origin. If returned, the importer must receive a declaration from Customs Service that the product is gone. If destroyed, the province authorities supervise the rendering process and notify the port authorities.

### 3. Miscellaneous

Waste control – Food waste from passenger ships is handled under a cooperative agreement with a disposal company. It goes straight to a rendering plant.

Training – Team members asked about training to implement the new EC rules and were told that there have been no detailed instructions, since the protocols were similar to those in place prior to EC accession.

Miscellaneous – A second BIP facility will be build for a new classification of shipments, called "mass products." These are shipped in small cartons. Most of them will be for transit. Shipments of this type are not entering currently but there is a demand. However, the resources may be difficult to obtain, as an entirely separate area may need to be built.

Per the current Chief BVO at the Gdynia seaport, a third unit will be constructed in Gdansk. All 3 units will be administered by a single supervisor, and, apparently, few (if any) additional personnel will be hired. The Chief BVO is concerned about resources being stretched.

### **Visits to animal farms**

#### Large swine operation – Locise

This operation in Mazowieckie province started production in 2000 and has a base herd of 1200 sows, with approximately 7500 swine total. It is a joint venture with 4 owners. Team A met with the owner and herd manager, as well as an approved private veterinarian who works solely on this operation, and the district veterinary official. The team examined the herd registers, animal movement papers, and health records provided by the private veterinarian.

Animal identification – Each animal receives a tattoo shortly after birth that consists of the mother's number, the date of birth, and an internal serial number. When moved off-farm the animals receive a tattoo with the unique herd ARMA number. This number is assigned to the owner and consists of the country code (PL) followed by a unique 9-digit owner ID number and a 3-digit herd number. The base breeding herd is given individual ear tags.

Biosecurity – Employees must sign a contract stating that they had no contact with other farms in the 3 days before entering the facility. Employees may not keep pigs themselves. They are required to change clothes fully with shower upon entry and exit. There are disinfection mats and ventilation fans for disease prevention. Feed trucks and other cars enter through disinfection mats and the drivers must change clothes before entering. Parking spaces are cleaned and disinfected afterwards. One truck is used only on the farm for feeding purposes. It is an all-in all-out production system.

Private veterinarian – The private veterinarian listed several clinical signs of CSF when asked. He performs post-mortem examinations on fallen animals on the farm. If he strongly suspected CSF, he would notify the district officer immediately. There are no government subsidies for private veterinary services in Poland.

District veterinarian – If CSF were suspected, the district officer would come to the farm as soon as possible, perform an epidemiological investigation and take samples (tissue from dead, blood from live), and establish restriction and surveillance zones. She would take a census of the animals on the farm and in the zones, and notify the PVI and municipal authorities. The restrictions would remain in place as long as the laboratory results were pending.

Fallen animals – One employee is designated to work with these animals. There are two containers in a “dirty” area that are protected from rats and other scavengers. The carcasses are taken away by the “utilization factory” but the truck does not come into where the live animals are kept.

Disease surveillance/monitoring – This farm has been part of CSF monitoring conducted by the district officer. She took samples from 5 boars in 2004 and drove them to Pulawy.

Documentation – The site visit team saw animal identification records, animal health and medication records, tattooing instruments, and ear tags.

#### Large swine operation – Wielbark

Team B visited a large swine operation in Warminsko-Mazurskie province that has 1000 sows available for production of piglets. The total number of swine on the premises was 15,000. Piglets stay one month with the sow before being moved to another building. This operation is one of several (3 or 4) owned by the same commercial unit.

General operations – Replacement animals are obtained from a single breeding facility located in another province but owned by the same firm. This operation collects semen from its own boars for artificial insemination. The veterinary official and operators indicated that the closed-system approach (including slaughterhouses) was followed at the national level.

A full-time veterinarian is responsible for the commercial operation in Wielbark. Autogenous vaccines are used, and 80% of the costs incurred are preventative. The folks did not appear to be intimately familiar with CSF. Fever was the clinical sign they mentioned as suspect. Samples are taken from animals at the commercial facility with a high fever, about 1 per year. E coli is a concern. There is regular contact with official vets who visit at 6 month intervals, approximately. Test samples are sent to laboratories in Olsztyn or Pulawy.

Biosecurity – There was double fencing around the premises and restricted access, as well as a disinfectant bath for foot traffic and vehicles. Contact with wild boar is prohibited by the double fencing. In addition, a guard dog patrols at night. There are no cats on the premises, but storks are seen on a seasonal basis. Pigs are housed inside, and team members were not allowed inside the second fence. Personnel (1) cannot keep/handle pigs and (2) cannot eat pork from outside the farm.

Surprisingly, there is very little new animal introduction to these facilities – they raise all replacement gilts, and only introduce new genetics through boars added to their AI program. The protocol for new animal introductions was sound.

Slaughter – The same firm owns the slaughterhouse used by this operation, in Sokolv. The slaughterhouse is the origin of processed hams exported to United States, European Union, and the national market. It slaughters 1million pigs/year and is the second biggest in the country.

#### Small swine operation – Locise

This small farm in Mazowieckie province has 23 swine (3 sows and 20 piglets) and has been in production since 1993. Team A met with the owner and the district veterinarian.

The owner had registered the herd one week before and had just received the ARMA ID and herd register; the register was not yet filled out. This farm had not been previously visited by an official veterinarian although an approved veterinarian comes to vaccinate and in case of illness. Per the owner, there are no wild boar around the property, but he is not a hunter. He is aware that compensation is available in case of an outbreak.

District veterinarian – Farms are chosen for CSF monitoring based on risk factors such as high swine density, close to forest land, ongoing health issues, or close to a transit way. This district is considered low risk since it is not adjacent to the border or to any areas that have experienced outbreaks in the past 5 years. The district officer must collect 29 samples/quarter but there is little guidance on which herds to sample and no requirement for a minimum number of samples per herd.

Documentation – Animal identification records reviewed.

#### Small swine operation – Szczytno

Team B visited a small swine operation in Szczytno in Warminsko-Mazurskie province. The district has 23,000 pigs. Farms are classified as small, medium or large by population. Twenty-five farms have between 100 and 500 pigs. Approximately 2000 farms have 1-5 pigs. There are 15,000 to 16,000 pigs in the district.

General operations – This farmer has a 37 hectare farm that supported by a dairy operation, although the owner kept horses, pigs, rabbits, and sometimes pigeons. He keeps 2 pigs housed in a building. Twice per year, he has his pigs slaughtered at a slaughterhouse approximately 7km from his holding. The meat goes for his own use, and he replaces the pigs for the next round.

Biosecurity – This farm confines the animals in buildings, as do most small farms in this area (limits contact with wild boar).

Disease control – Officials were asked how likely it would be for small farmers to see/report sick pigs. We were told that there were no diseases in the district that they would be required to report. When asked when he might contact a veterinarian, the farmer said that he would report if his pigs didn't eat. Veterinarians have a good image with the public in Poland and the interactions are good, as seen during the visit to this farm.

Animal identification – Farm registration appears to be encouraged by the fact that, if a farmer wants anything from an EU budget, it has to be registered.

## **Visits to diagnostic laboratories**

### National Veterinary Research Institute

The laboratory team visited the NVL in Pulawy, which functions as a state research institute. It is responsible for monitoring infectious diseases of animals and is also a reference laboratory for several diseases (vesicular diseases, rinderpest: CSF, ASF, Aujeszky's disease; rabies, scrapie, BSE; and salmonellosis, brucellosis, anthrax), as well as a food and animal feed control reference laboratory. The NVRI also provides post-graduate education and specialization programs for veterinarians and related professionals.

#### 1. Classical Swine Fever review

Poland had a problem with CSF during the 1960s. The last occurrence of CSF was in 1994 which involved wild boar and domestic pigs and resulted in 100 outbreaks in total. The disease was stamped out and Poland was recognized by the OIE as CSF free later in 1994. Poland was declared as officially free of CSF by the EU in 1999 and was given permission to export frozen pig meat to the EU in 2000. Poland still cannot export wild boar meat to the EU.

All swine disease work is carried out at the NVL in Pulawy. The Swine Disease Department has a staff of 24: 8 scientists, 8 technicians, and 8 helpers. The department is responsible for the registration of all biologicals for swine, improving existing diagnostic methods, and routine diagnostics for all bacterial and viral diseases of swine. Pulawy has been an OIE Reference Laboratory for CSF since 1991 and has been officially recognized as the Polish National Reference Laboratory for CSF since 2002. Pulawy has participated in inter-laboratory comparison testing since 1994 and has co-operated with the EU Reference Laboratory for CSF in organizing inter-laboratory comparison testing for Central Europe.

There are 4 regional laboratories which also carry out serologic testing for CSF. In this regard, the NVL in Pulawy is responsible for the harmonization of standards and diagnostic methods of the regional labs. In 2005, Pulawy will also collect and analyze CSF serologic data collected by the regional labs.

There are a total of 24 million pigs and 1.6 million sows in Poland. These are distributed among 650,000 pig holdings. Approximately 600,000 pig holdings have produced fewer than 50 pigs/year, although there are a few holdings with a large number of animals (eg Smithfield – 15,000 sows). Swill feeding is prohibited by law.

The diagnostic tests for CSF that are carried out at the NVL are:

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Serology: | ELISA (Bomelli and IDEXX) – ISO 17025 accredited<br>Neutralization peroxidase-linked assay (NPLA) |
| Virology: | Antigen ELISA (Bomelli) – ISO 17025 accredited<br>One-tube nested RT-PCR<br>Virus isolation       |



All tests are performed in accordance within OIE recommendations and set up to discriminate CSF from BVD and BD virus and antibody.

Serologic monitoring – Poland is divided into 16 provinces and 308 districts. Each province has a PVI. The serologic testing activity for CSF over the past 4 years is summarized in the table below.

Year	Laboratory	Purpose of Testing	Number of Samples		
			Tested	Negative	Positive
2001	NVRI	Monitoring	10,539	10,539	-
		HCP	9,185	9,185	-
	Total		19,724	19,724	-
2002	NVRI	Monitoring	4,705	4,705	-
		HCP	9,566	9,566	-
	Regional lab	Monitoring	3,553	3,553	-
	Total		17,824	17,824	-
2003	NVRI	Monitoring	3,278	3,824	-
		HCP	9,927	9,927	-
	Regional lab	Monitoring	5,644	5,644	-
	Total		18,849	18,849	-
2004 (I-III)	NVRI	Monitoring	1,565	1,565	-
		HCP	6,766	6,766	-
	Regional lab	Monitoring	3,669	3,669	-
	Total		12,000	12,000	-

HCP –Health Control Programme (paid by farmers)

Serologic monitoring utilizes a targeted approach. For this purpose the country is divided into high and moderate risk regions. In high risk regions, 59 serum samples have to be tested per year and are defined by the following:

1. borders a country in which CSF is or was present during the last 5 years;
2. borders a country of unknown CSF status;
3. where CSF positive results were found within the last 6 years;
4. where the domestic pig population is at least 200 pigs/km<sup>2</sup>; or
5. where airports or seaports are located.

In moderate risk regions, 29 serum samples have to be tested per year and are defined by the following:

1. adjoining regions to countries where CSF occurred within the last 5 years; or
2. adjoining regions bordering countries where the CSF status is unknown.

CSF monitoring in wild boar is linked to trichinella testing. The sampling criteria for CSF monitoring in wild boar is similar to that for serologic monitoring in domestic pigs. In high risk regions blood samples, tonsils or lymph nodes must be tested from 10% of the wild boar shot. High risk regions are defined by:

1. positive CSF serologic results in the wild boar population within the last 5 years;
2. positive CSF serologic results in the domestic pig population with the last 6 years;
3. wild boar population density of at least 2 animals per km<sup>2</sup>; or

4. bordering a country where CSF has occurred in the previous 5 years or bordering a country where the CSF status is unknown.

In moderate risk regions, blood samples, tonsils or lymph nodes must be tested from 5% of the wild boar shot. Moderate risk regions are defined by a wild boar population density does not exceed 2 animals per km<sup>2</sup>. In addition, tissue (tonsils and lymph node) must be tested for each wild boar found dead.

The wild boar testing activity over the previous 4 years is summarized in the table below.

Year	Laboratory	Number of Blood Samples			Number of Organ Samples		
		Tested	Negative	Positive	Tested	Negative	Positive
2001	NVRI	5,415	5,415	-	540	540	-
2002	NVRI	2,241	2,241	-	196	196	-
	Regional	2,364	2,364	-	119	119	-
	Total	4,605	4,605	-	315	315	-
2003	NVRI	2,050	2,050	-	51	51	-
	Regional	2,707	2,707	-	239	239	-
	Total	4,757	4,757	-	290	290	-
2004 (I-III)	NVRI	1,075	1,075	-	35	35	-

Virologic assays and virus neutralizing assays for CSF are carried out under biosafety level 2 (BSL-2) conditions. This laboratory has restricted access and the laboratory site visit team was unable to inspect it. Anyone working within the laboratory which handles live CSF virus is restricted from visiting farms for a 2-week period.

The laboratory should consider developing a contingency plan for handling a large number of samples in case of an outbreak as the existing lab space for handling live virus cannot accommodate the high volume of tests.

Construction of a large addition to the National Veterinary Laboratory is scheduled to begin shortly. This will include biosafety level 3 (BSL-3) laboratory facilities in which CSFV work will be carried out.

PCR facilities were well equipped and conventional and real-time assays were available for CSF diagnosis. Developmental work is being carried out on a real-time RT-PCR assay that would be able to differentiate CSFV from BVDV and BDV.

## 2. Swine Vesicular Disease review

A PowerPoint presentation was given on the FMD/SVD laboratory. The laboratory is not located in Pulawy but is a branch office of the National Veterinary Laboratory in Zdzunska Wola. It is centrally located no more than 4-5 hours from any part of Poland. The laboratory is a biocontainment level 3 facility and does all the testing for FMD and SVD. No regional laboratories are equipped to carry out vesicular disease testing. This laboratory has a staff of 30 which includes 4 research scientists, 9 laboratory staff, 4 additional laboratory workers, and 13 administrators/support staff.

Research activities focus on diagnostic test improvement, implementation of new diagnostic techniques, and the molecular and antigenic characterization of vesicular

disease agents. The laboratory applied for ISO 17025 accreditation and was audited in July 2004. Six diagnostic methods were considered: 1) FMDV isolation, 2) SVDV isolation, 3) FMD virus neutralization test, 4) SVD virus neutralization test, 5) SVDV antigen ELISA, and 6) SVDV antibody ELISA.

Work on SVD began in 1972 coinciding with an outbreak of the disease. Poland has been free of SVD since the same year. During the previous 3 years, no field samples were submitted that were from suspect SVD cases.

SVD serologic testing employs the ELISA described in the OIE Manual which utilizes the MAb 5B7 (Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale della Lombardia e dell'Emilia Romagna, Brescia, Italy) and the virus neutralization test. A summary of SVD serologic testing carried out over the past four years is summarized in the table below.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Monitoring</b>	<b>Export</b>	<b>Import</b>	<b>Total</b>
2001	3540	1681	199	5420
2002	3431	3209	1605	8245
2003	3360	5308	1111	9779
2004	2783	4785	40	7618

The cell culture unit produces cells used in virus isolation and virus neutralization tests. IBRS-2 and BHK-21 cell lines as well as primary calf and piglet kidney cells are available. The cell lines originate from reference labs that have certified them free of contaminating agents. Quality control includes mycoplasma testing using a commercially available kit, sterility testing of cell culture media, and assessing the sensitivity of the lines to SVDV and FMDV.

The vesicular disease virus isolation protocol involves 2 passages in IBRS-2 cells of 48-72 hours each. Cells are checked twice daily for the presence of cytopathic effect. If a cytopathic effect is observed, the culture fluid is tested for FMDV and SVDV antigens using an indirect sandwich ELISA. The reagents for this ELISA are obtained from Pirbright. If no cytopathic effect is observed and the indirect sandwich ELISA results are negative following 2 cell passages, the submission is reported as negative for FMDV and SVDV. If enough material is submitted an indirect sandwich ELISA is run in parallel with virus isolation in cell culture.

PCR methods are available for SVD but not used routinely.

The laboratory participates in the FAO/OIE ring tests.

### 3. Summary and recommendations

1. The director and staff were excited about the new construction that is going to start soon for building BL2 and 3 facilities that will be completed in 18 months.
2. The laboratory has experienced professional and technical staff to support diagnostics and research development. The department is well equipped to run diagnostic and research projects on swine diseases including CSF.
3. The OIE described battery of tests for CSF and SVD are performed within the OIE guidelines and recommendations.

4. ELISA tests for CSF and other swine diseases are accredited by ISO 17025 and more tests are submitted for accreditation.
5. Targeted CSF surveillance and sampling criteria for CSF monitoring across the districts in wild boars and domestic pigs is adequate.
6. The communication between NVRI and the regional laboratories that run CSF tests needs to be improved. Samples collected from the field and sent directly to the regional laboratory for CSF testing are not being shared with NVRI.
7. A contingency plan that outlines the diagnostic scheme and laboratory space for CSF testing during an outbreak to accommodate a large number of samples should be put in place.

### **Visit to a district ARMA office**

Team A visited the ARMA office in Biala Podlaska and met with technical representatives, who provided an overview of the animal ID systems and a demonstration of the data entry and tracking.

A system for bovine identification is complete and a system for swine identification began in December 2003, starting with animal traders and large farms. Each animal owner is given a unique number regardless of what species of animals are kept. Information is kept according to owner number regarding how many animals are on the farm, and what species. Both the buyer and the seller are required to notify ARMA when a transaction occurs. Unique numbers are given to slaughterhouses as well, and confirmation sent to ARMA when animals are slaughtered.

The computer system raises an alert when it notes a discrepancy. The source is notified twice by mail and then visited by an ARMA employee. If the discrepancy is not resolved, ARMA notifies the veterinary inspectorate and movement restrictions are placed on the premises. There is no monetary incentive to register, but owners will not be compensated during an outbreak if the animal identification is not in order.